



**Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller**

February 12, 2015

## **Former Overton County PTO President Steals \$10,465**

A special investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury has found that Tara Scott, the former president of the Hilham Elementary School Parent-Teacher Organization, stole at least \$10,465 from the PTO. This investigation was completed in conjunction with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation.

During the period August 2012 through February 2014, Tara Scott failed to deposit concession cash collections totaling \$5,520. The money was collected during volleyball and basketball games.

Ms. Scott told investigators she took collections home with her and placed them in a locked cash box under her bed. Ms. Scott said each time she retrieved the cash box in preparation for the next game, she noticed the box was empty. Ms. Scott claims the money was stolen again and again over a period of nearly two years. Tara Scott never alerted anyone to the missing funds, and she did not stop the repeated thefts.

Investigators also discovered that Tara Scott wrote PTO checks totaling \$4,945 payable to herself or to "cash." Ms. Scott admitted she used the proceeds for her personal benefit.

On February 2, 2015, Tara Scott and her husband, Lonnie Scott, were each indicted by the Overton County Grand Jury on one count of theft over \$10,000.

"Parents play a vital role in their child's education, and I commend honest parents who volunteer in Tennessee school groups," said Comptroller Justin P. Wilson. "Unfortunately, there are people who will use their positions to steal money. Simple checks and balances can help prevent theft."

To view the special investigation report online, go to: <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/ia/>.

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